

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

There are still several students who have not yet paid their subscriptions for the current year. Will all make an effort to do so before the end of this term? I am quite sure if students only realised how much trouble would be saved by sending them in in good time, they would all try to be first, and personally, I should be grateful.—LILIAN GRAY, 5, Old Palace Lane, Richmond, Surrey.

REPORT OF THE S.E.C.

Held at 13, Chilworth Street, March, 23rd, 1912.

Present: Misses Bishop, Davis, Evans, Franklin, Gray, Kitching, and Wix.

The main business of the meeting was to make arrangements for the Annual Meeting, to be held in London during the summer. The outcome of the various suggestions will be found in the notice of the "At Home," at 50, Porchester Terrace, by the kind co-operation and invitation of Mrs. Franklin.

Another point brought forward was whether papers, etc., by non-students should be published in the PLANT.

The general feeling was that the magazine should be supported entirely by students, and that there should be no trouble in filling the six issues each year, if each member of the Association would do her share in writing for the same. If, however, the Editor found herself without sufficient matter for any number, she might insert anything she thought might be helpful, and that she should notify the reason for its insertion. It was also decided to devote a page to "Exchange and Mart" for six months, to see whether such a means of advertising would help students to procure things they needed, or to dispose of things for which they no longer found any use.

AMBLESIDE CONFERENCE, 1913.

Students will doubtless be quite aware of the fact that next Easter brings with it another Conference at Ambleside, and that this coming year the House of Education celebrates its "coming of age." We feel that some special feature should be introduced into the Conference on this account, and about October the S.E.C. will begin to plan the programme. So will all students decide in their own minds, between now and then, what they would like to do, so that when we ask for suggestions some really helpful ones may be forthcoming? It would be the greatest help to the Committee if students would take the trouble to do this, for we often feel that the response to a general appeal is so small, and generally comes from the same students. Apart from this we shall be glad of suggestions for papers and subjects for discussion, and nominations have to be made for a new Committee, for all members, *ex-officio* and otherwise, retire at Easter, according to the rules of our Association. So will students please think hard during their summer holidays, so that they may be simply bubbling over with suggestions when the right time comes.

LILIAN GRAY, *Hon. Sec.*

SECOND-HAND BOOKS.

Bible Lessons.—Genesis and St. Matthew, 1s.; Exodus, 5d.; Sunday School Lessons, Calender 3, 9d.; Lent Legends, 1s.

Geography.—Ambleside Reader, Bk. I. (two copies), 7d.; Ambleside Reader, Bk. II. (two copies), 8d.; This World of Ours, 1s.

Arithmetic.—Sonnenschein ABC, Part II., 6d.; Part I., 6d.

Natural History.—Wild Nature won by Kindness, 9d.

French.—Little French Folk, 1s.; La Lyre Enfantine, 6d.; French Series on Gouin Method, Thémoin, First Book for Children, 8d.; Gouin Method, Thémoin, Vol. I., 1s. 9d.; Hachette's French Primer, 8d.

Latin.—First Latin Course (Scott and Jones), 9d.

Geometry.—Hall and Steven's School Geometry, Bks. 1-4, 1s. 10d.

Citizenship.—Laws of Everyday Life, 1s.

Drill.—Ball and Breathing Exercises, by A. James, 9d.; Board of Education's Syllabus of Physical Exercises, 6d.

Reading.—Happy Reader, bk. ii., 4 copies, 6d.; bk. iii., 4 copies, 6d.

Writing.—A New Handwriting, by M. M. Bridges, 2s. 6d.

Recitation.—Ballads by Cotterel.

May I remind students that I have the above-mentioned second-hand books for sale?

When writing to ask for books, would students kindly state *exactly* what they are wanting, and not ask for "any books used in Class III.," etc., as not having the current programmes of all the classes, I do not know which are being used.

I should be glad if students would mark the prices they want when they send lists of second-hand books of which they wish to dispose, at the same time certifying that to their knowledge they are free from infection. This would save unnecessary correspondence. For the same reason, would purchasers kindly remit the cost of books bought plus the postage as soon as possible after the receipt of them?

G. M. BERNAU,

Lerryn, Hervey Road, Blackheath, S.E.

LETTERS.

SCALE HOW,

May 8th, 1912.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

How delightful it must have been for those of you who have spent these anniversary days at Winchester; even here, far from the actual scene of the gathering, we feel its great

interest and importance, and eagerly, every day, we wait for the letters which Miss Mason sends out for us to read; and you may imagine how Miss Kitching, Miss Cruse, and Miss Smith will be bombarded with questions on their return.

It is a long time to return in thought to last half-term, and tell you of our doings since then; but we will begin with the day itself. It had a fair—and indoors a bustling—beginning, but the weather, thinking it too great an effort to sustain at that time of the year, altered its mind and gave us one of the worst Lake District specimens. Some of the students had a time they will "never forget" on Wrynose Pass, but happily found a cottage where they were dried and warmed before starting back. Others, more fortunate, got to the hotel at Dungeon Ghyll just as the worst was beginning, and settled there with books until things looked more promising. However, in spite of these adventures, no colds were caught, owing to the famous "hot drinks" that Miss Cruse had prepared for our return. That evening, as Mrs. Franklin was staying here, Miss Edmonds gave a most interesting drawing-room evening on "Alphonse Daudet." During the same visit, the juniors "covered themselves with glory" in acting scenes from "The Rivals," which were inimitably funny, and, happily, dear Mrs. Malaprop figured largely in those chosen. A week before this we had had an extra long half-holiday—intended, but for the weather, to be an extra half-term—and which Miss Mason came in one tea-time to announce; it was followed by enthusiasm better imagined than described.

One Sunday, just after half-term, Mr. Kitching came and talked to us about missionary work in Uganda and of the rapid change, under the influence of Christianity, of barbarism into civilisation. He told us also of what must have been a great work, that is, making a grammar of the native language. The usual way is to get a "boy," and pointing to, for instance, the nose, ask him for the native word, and so collect first the nouns. This seems satisfactory, but later it

is discovered that he has probably given two or three words in one, as "a white nose," or "the small nose," according to the nose pointed at. However, these are apparently but minor difficulties. Mr. Kitching told us also of a curious custom that came into evidence when they began to build the new church. All promised well, for the materials were there, and two hundred men. The chief appointed overseers, then went and took a seat in the shade of a tree. These overseers in their turn appointed others, and joined their chief. This division and sub-division continued until there was a mere handful of workers, and the larger number of the two hundred sat under the tree. Then, and only then, "all that remained of them" set to work.

Near the end of the term the annual missionary bazaar was held, and several of us enjoyed helping Miss Kitching at her stall.

One afternoon about the middle of March the seniors were summoned to "St. George's," and there each one had an alphabetical letter given to her which she was to keep a secret and which would stand instead of her name in the list. Then Miss Smith read the whole list through. For instance, "K is inclined to stoop, but otherwise would walk well," or "M holds herself well, and deserves her colours." Then the happy ones who had won their badges (viz., a piece of green and brown silk to sew on the gym. tunic) had them presented. By this means each one was told her faults of "deportment" in an impersonal and private way, and yet felt spurred on to try and win her "colours" at the next meeting.

We have had several drawing-room evenings; "Beethoven," by Miss Henderson; "Scandinavian Mythology," by Miss King; "The Navy," by Miss Beck; the children's Musical Evening; "The Winter's Tale"; "The School for Scandal"; and "She Stoops to Conquer."

The flower list for this term numbers 148.—Yours sincerely,

THE PRESENT STUDENTS.

Avonhurst, Chislehurst.

DEAR EDITOR,—I suppose that we are all aware of the existence of a little Nature magazine called the *Children's Quarterly*, but I do not know that we quite realise that the Students' Association holds itself responsible for it. To procure a sufficiency of suitable articles has always been rather a difficulty to the Acting Editor, and, personally, I am afraid that I do not always apply to the right people. So it would be a very great help if those students who are willing to write for the *Children's Quarterly* would send me their names and addresses and the subjects on which they prefer to write, so that I could apply to them in time of need.

I am very anxious to get the children themselves more interested in the magazine, and I think that students could help me in this also by encouraging their pupils to write for it, or to me.—Yours, etc.,

JANET MACFARLANE

(Acting Honorary Editor of the *Children's Quarterly*).

NOTES ON CRITICISM LESSONS.

(From *Scale How.*)

Science lessons should always be given with illustrations and experiments, and, above all, should leave a feeling of wonder, but more as an atmosphere than expressed.

Care must be taken not to give too many ideas to a young child, as it is incapable of dealing clearly with too many at once.

No severe strain should be required of a young child—a quarter of an hour each lesson is quite enough for the first year of "Child Pianist."

With little children it is necessary to be very careful in the choice of words, as they must express the idea clearly and in a manner within the children's comprehension.

If a lesson is too long the children become first tired, then

stupid, and mischief made in a tired brain becomes permanent mind-furniture.

The object of every Scripture lesson is to give new thoughts of God, and both the teacher and the pupils should see visions.

Arithmetic and grammar lessons must be prompt and sharp. The pupils' minds must not be allowed to think of things more interesting than adjectives or adverbs.

Never read from a book which has no literary value.

In science it is not necessary to read from a book; the girls read themselves, and the teacher supplements from her own knowledge.

BOOK LIST.

"Health, Strength, and Happiness." By Dr. Saleeby.

"Parenthood." By Dr. Saleeby.

"Maria Theresa." M. M. Moffatt. (Methuen.)

A delightful life, and strongly recommended.

"The Training of Memory in Art." By Louis de Boisbaudran.

This book has been already recommended by Miss Sumner in her letter to us on drawing, and a short while ago was on sale at the *Times* Book Club at a greatly reduced price, about 3s.

"The Taming of John Blunt." By Alfred Ollivant, author of "Owd Bob" and "The Gentleman."

This is a capital book, quite charming, so fresh and full of life.

"Der Trotzkopf," von E. v. Rhoden, and to be bought at Siegle, Regent Street, is an amusing book, written for German children, and not difficult; suitable for Class III. or even IV. It is the school life of a naughty little German girl, and is very brightly written in a helpful, colloquial style.

"Modern Europe," by Alison Phillips (Rivingtons, 6s. net), may be found helpful in preparing Class IV. history for this term. It deals with Europe from 1815 till 1899.

"History of Our Own Times" (3 vols.), by Justin McCarthy, is also helpful for those who can get the loan of it.

"Letters from India." By Lady Wilson. (Blackwood, 7s. 6d.)

A most charming collection of letters dealing with many aspects of life in India. Well worth reading.

"Facing the Facts." By Lowther Clarke. (Nisbet, 6s.)

A series of articles by men best able to judge on the various stages of religion in different classes in England. Religion in the towns, country, Universities, public schools, etc. Very interesting.

"The Prevention of Destitution." By Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb. (Longmans, 6s.)

Ought to be read by all interested in social work of the age.

"How to Understand Sculpture." By Margaret Thomas. (Bell, 6s.)

BOOKS ON VAN EYCK.

"Early Flemish Artists." By Martin Conway.
Absolutely fascinating, but, I fear, out of print.

"Painters: German, Flemish, and Dutch." By Buxton and Poynter.
Useful handbook.

Grant Allen's "Guide to Belgium," and Badeker's "Belgium."

Both give interesting accounts of Van Eyck's work.

"The Art of the Belgian Galleries." By Esther Singleton.
(Bell, 5s. (?))

This is worth getting. It is richly illustrated, and there is quoted in it Crowe's description of Van Eyck's great picture, "The Adoration of the Lamb." I think it is 5s., not more.

NOVELS WORTH READING.

- "Clayhanger." By Arnold Bennett.
 "Hilda Lessways." By Arnold Bennett.
 "The Matador of the Five Towns." By Arnold Bennett.
 "The Patrician." By John Galsworthy.
 "The Man of Property." By John Galsworthy.
 "Fraternity." John Galsworthy.
 "The Coward." R. H. Benson.

NOTES ON JAN VAN EYCK.

Jan van Eyck was the younger of two brothers who lived and painted in Ghent in the early part of the fifteenth century. The elder brother, Hubert, instructed Jan, and their sister Margaret, "who devoted herself to painting with such ardour as to reject all offers of marriage." "Hubert and John worked many years together, enjoying a high reputation, which became European as regards John, on his discovery of the art of painting in oils, or at least of such an improvement on the methods previously in use as to be tantamount to the discovery. . . . It was in this new style of painting that the brothers executed their most important work, the altar piece for the chapel of the Vyts family in the Cathedral at Ghent."

The original plan contained twelve pictures, in two rows, seven above and five below. There were wings, or shutters, holding the side pictures, and when these were closed the back was painted with four more pictures, the Annunciation, and figures of prophets and saints.

Two of the pictures of the original scheme are given for

our study this term—the Adoration of the Immaculate Lamb, and the panel containing St. Cecelia. There are only three of the twelve left in the chapel, the figure of God the Father enthroned, the Lamb, and one of the side groups. The idea of the whole is taken from the account in the seventh chapter of the Book of Revelation, where the souls of the blessed are described as coming to adore the Lamb. Notice the Dove, poised midway between the Father and the Son (God the Father is the upper central picture, and the Adoration comes directly beneath it), because it was a very usual custom to represent the Trinity thus. "The Dove descends on the Lamb from the Father." Four companies kneel or stand in distinct groups, and at a respectful distance around the altar, Apostles, saints, doctors and popes, and behind come a company of women on the left, led by St. Barbara and St. Agnes, and of the blessed "who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb" on the right. The exquisite colour and vividness of the original is, of course, lost in the reproduction. "The altar is red, the colour of love and martyrdom, and lilies and roses, symbolical of virginity and immortality, are scattered over the foreground. . . . The landscape is most minute; every leaf and flower is discriminated; the multitude of little figures is extraordinary—no less than 330 heads are said to be distinguishable, and, like the leaves of a tree, not one exactly resembles the other."

Angels kneel directly around the altar, with parti-coloured wings and variegated dresses, many praying with joined hands, others holding aloft emblems of the Passion, two in front swinging censers. Of the foremost groups, the Apostles are distinguished by wearing violet cloaks, and are barefoot, with long hair. St. Francis and St. Dominic, in black and brown habits, are among the saints on the right, and St. Jerome, with his cardinal's hat. The other popes and saints, in their gorgeous jewelled robes, are very difficult to distinguish. I cannot attempt to identify them. . . . "The Faithful who have thus reached the scene of the Sacrifice are

surrounded by a perfect wilderness of flowering shrubs, lilies, and other beautiful plants."

The St. Cecilia picture we have, originally formed the third on the right from the centre of the top row. Its companion on the other side is a beautiful group of singing angels. On either side of the Central Figure are pictures of the Blessed Virgin and John the Baptist, "the two human beings fittest to stand near the Father." The dignity and beauty of these figures is very great, and typical of the work of Van Eyck, whose passion for detail, and the accessories of his subject, never was allowed to impair the nobility of the large design.

Sometimes I think these great painters of the Renaissance wanted to comfort their public with showing that really the lives of the saints that they painted were human lives, and these quaint touches of realism were put in to bring the subject nearer to the life of to-day, or what was then to-day. One of our other pictures, "the portraits of Jan Arnolfini and his wife," is again typical of Van Eyck's special manner at its best. Personally, I think the picture is at first repellent. After the glories of air and sunshine in Botticelli it is mean, circumscribed, small. But it has grown on me tremendously with study. It was not intended to be a popular work. The Flemish artists did not, like the Italian, paint for the folk, but for the delight of a small clique of cultured and solid individuals. They painted as their employers worked, with energy, honesty, and endurance; they cared not for beauty of the more palpable and less enduring kind, but they cared infinitely for truth. . . . "Here are unmistakably the men and women of the time, set down in their habit as they lived." Note in this picture the trim order of the room, the speckless polish of the floor, on which the good wife may walk without her shoes (or, should it be, *must* walk?); the brightness of the mirror, which has on its frame ten minute reproductions of the ten moments of the Passion, and reflects so clearly the room on its surface, showing us more than the picture—a real "Alice" looking-glass. Note also the elaboration of the

signature, "Jan van Eyck was here" (in Latin), which so exactly expresses the modesty and veracity of the artist. The motto of Van Eyck, which he frequently put on his pictures, was "Als ich kan," the first half of a Dutch proverb, "As I can, but not as I will." "God alone can finish; and the more intelligent the human mind becomes, the more the infiniteness of interval is felt between human and divine work in this respect."—("Modern Painters.")

I think this aptly describes the modesty and the fidelity of the painter, who spends his skill as much in the delineation of the curves of his friend's candlestick as of the face of the friend himself.

I am afraid I should not take up more space with these notes. My object has been to say what I think about Jan van Eyck, and lay stress on what are to me the difficult aspects of his work. Students will find "Early Flemish Painters," Crowe and Cavalcaselli, "Early Flemish Artists," by W. M. Conway, "The Flemish School," by Wauters, and "Handbook to the National Gallery," E. T. Cook, all very useful. I have quoted largely from them, and also from "History of Christian Art," vol. ii., by Lord Lindsay. All these are standard works, and can be had from the London Library or Mudie's.

E. C. ALLEN.

THE WINCHESTER GATHERING.

AN ABBREVIATED TIME-TABLE.

MONDAY, MAY 6TH.

Afternoon.—"Fairy Tales," by Miss Shedlock.

Evening.—"The Happiness of Social Work," by Hon. Lily Montagu.

TUESDAY, MAY 7TH.

Morning.—Special Service in the Cathedral. Lessons. Folk-songs by the children.

Afternoon.—Indoor Scouting (it was wet). "Time of Singing Birds," by Miss E. L. Turner.

Evening.—Scale How Evening. "Jane Austin," by Miss Chaplin.